

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2132

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, UK

SUBJECT: BREZHNEV'S SPEECH AT WILSON LUNCH

DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

1. SUMMARY. IN HIS LUNCH SPEECH FOR PRIME MINISTER WILSON (ME

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PORTION SEPTTEL) BREZHNEV REAFFIRMED SOVIET COMMITMENT TO DETENTE,

BUT--TO THE EXTENT HE ALLUDED AT ALL TO THE UNITED STATES--HIS REFERENCES WERE DISTINCTLY COOL. END SUMMARY.

2. BREZHNEV STRESSED THAT THE "LEADERS OF THE SOVIET UNION" (AN INTERESTING COLLECTIVE REFERENCE) ARE DETERMINED TO DO "EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER" TO MAKE DETENTE IRREVERSIBLE. IN CONTRASTING THE TWO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL TENDENCIES (STRENGTHENING DETENTE VS. REVIVING THE COLD WAR) HE ASSOCIATED THE LATTER TENDENCY WITH "INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES"--A SWIPE, INTER ALIA, AT THE U.S. CONGRESS. IN ADDITION TO HIS IMPLIED CRITICISMS OF U.S. DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST (SEPTEL), BREZHNEV'S ONLY SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE U.S. WAS TO PUT IT THIRD ON THE LIST OF COUNTRIES (BEHIND FRANCE AND THE FRG) WITH WHICH "POSITIVE CHANGES" HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN SOVIET RELATIONS. MOREOVER, THOUGH BREZHNEV TOUCHED ON ARMS CONTROL, HE DID NOT MENTION SALT. WHILE BREZHNEV COULD NOT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED TO DWELL ON U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS IN A BILATERAL LUNCH FOR A THIRD-COUNTRY LEADER (THOUGH HE DID SO AT A LUNCH FOR THE HUNGARIAN LEADER KADAR LAST FALL), WE SUSPECT THIS COOLNESS ON THE U.S. WAS INTENTIONAL IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENT SINCE THE SOVIET TURNDOWN OF MFN.

3. BREZHNEV ALSO MAINTAINED THE STUDIED BLANDNESS WITH WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN DESCRIBING THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE UK. HE NOTED THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS HAD SLOWED DOWN AND THAT THE UK "COULD BE"--I.E. WAS NOT YET--A GOOD PARTNER OF THE USSR'S. BESIDES REFLECTING A STANDARD SOVIET LINE, WE WOULD GUESS THERE IS SOME PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTENT IN THIS AS WELL. NOW THAT BREZHNEV IS RUNNING THINGS FOR THE SOVIETS DURING THE VISIT, THE STAGE MAY BE BEING SET FOR A POST-VISIT SOVIET EFFORT TO SHOW THAT HE MADE THE BRITISH "BETTER" PARTNERS.

4. BREZHNEV'S REFERENCES TO CSCE AND MBFR WERE SOMEWHAT SOURER THAN USUAL. ON CSCE HE COMPLAINED ABOUT DELAYS AND EFFORTS TO GAIN SHORT-TERM ADVANTAGES. (AND HE OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO A THIRD STAGE SUMMIT.) ON MBFR HE WAS BOTHERED BY ATTEMPTS AT UNILATERAL ADVANTAGES. WE SEE ALL THIS AS PRIMARILY A TACTIC TO PRESSURE THE BRITISH FOR MOVEMENT ON THESE TWO EUROPEAN NEGOTIATIONS.

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5. BREZHNEV DEVOTED A LOT OF ATTENTION TO BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH THE UK, AND HIS REFERENCE TO LARGE-SCALE, LONG-TERM ECONOMIC COOPERATION INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS WILL VALUE A COMMUNIQUE REFERENCE TO SUCH COOPERATION, AS THEY HAVE WITH THE U.S., THE FRG, AND FRANCE. INTERESTINGLY, BREZHNEV NOTED THAT EXPANDED ECONOMIC TIES WILL GIVE JOBS TO THOUSANDS OF BRITISH WORKERS. THIS IS AN ARGUMENT WHICH SOVIET IDEOLOGUE PONOMAREV AND OTHERS HAVE USED TO BLUNT CRITICISM FROM THE WEST EUROPEAN LEFT

THAT THE SOVIETS ARE SACRIFICING THE INTERESTS OF EUROPEAN
WORKERS IN THEIR PURSUIT OF DETENTE. OVERALL TONE AND CONTENTS
OF BREZHNEV'S REMARKS SEEM INTENDED AS PRECURSOR TO WHAT MAY WELL
BE TOUGH SESSION BETWEEN SECREARY AND GROMYKO IN GENEVA.
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